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ABSTRACT

Written to help local school systems more fully utilize community expertise in their career education programs, this guide discusses the following topics in a question/answer format: What is community involvement? What challenges must be overcome to gain effective community involvement? and How are community involvement activities developed and implemented? (This guide is one of several focusing on the development of different components of a career education program.) (BM)

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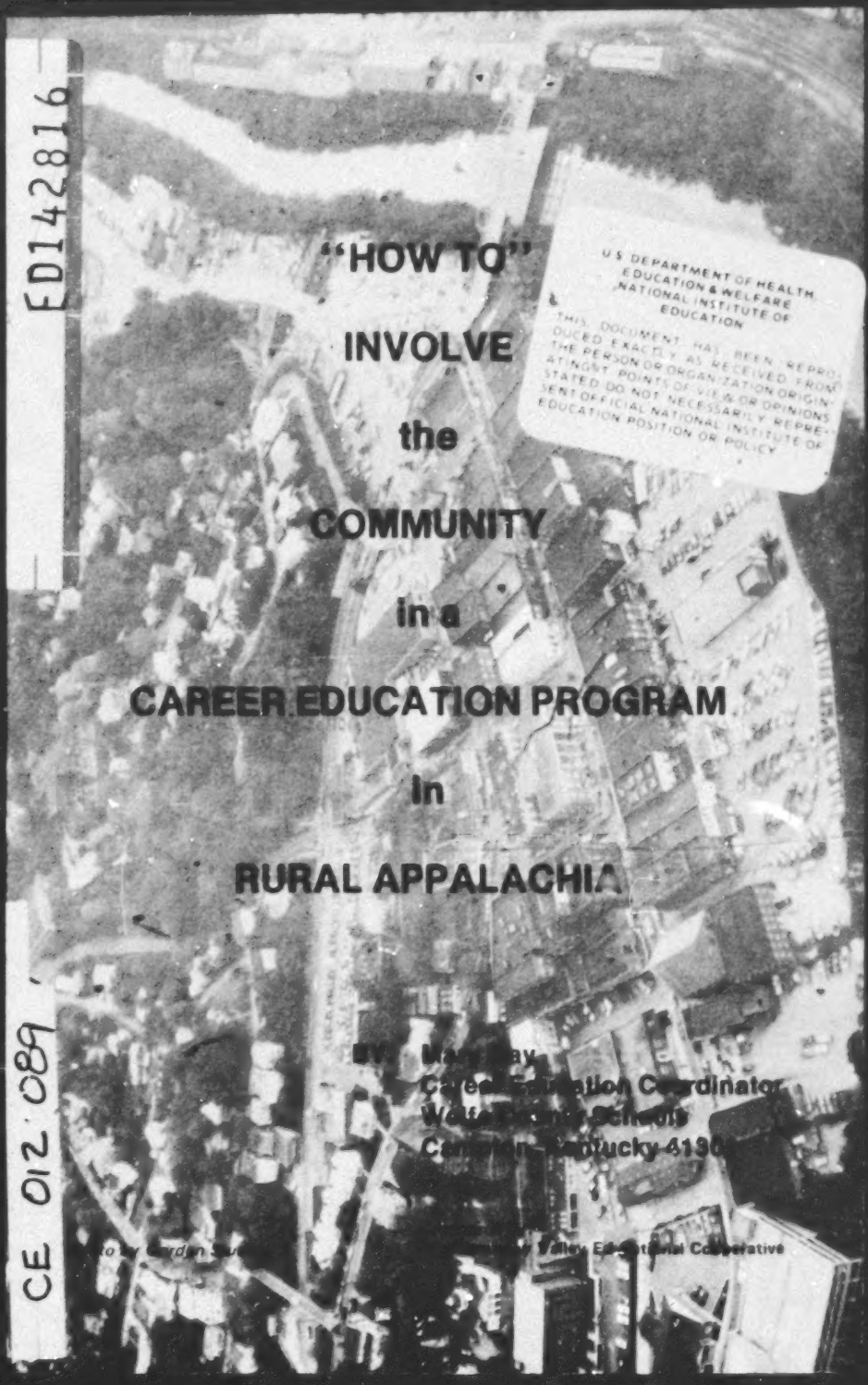

"HOW TO" INVOLVE the COMMUNITY in a CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAM in RURAL APPALACHIA

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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A Generic Definition of Career Education

by

Dr. Kenneth B. Hoyt
Associate Commissioner
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"In a generic sense, the definition of Career Education must obviously be derived from the definition of Career and Education. 'Career' is the totality of work one does in his/her lifetime. 'Education' is the totality of experience through which one learns. Based on these two (2) definitions, 'Career Education' is defined as follows: 'Career Education' is the totality of experience through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of his/her way of living."

THIS GUIDE IS TO HELP YOU UTILIZE THE EXPERTISE OF PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY SO THAT YOU WILL HAVE A MORE MEANINGFUL AND MORE PURPOSEFUL CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY.

If You Want To Know . . . . . .

what it is, **find the second page;**

the challenges, **see the fourth page;**

how to develop activities, **check the fifth page;**

how to implement activities, **turn to the tenth page;**

a concluding thought, **look at the fifteenth page.**

Do You Know What Community Involvement Is?

If your answer is yes, turn the page →

If your answer is no, read on ↓

Community involvement, in rural Appalachia school settings, is soliciting the expertise of local resource people, business and industry personnel, community leaders, and parents, and affording them an opportunity to *share with students* their *knowledge of work skills, academic skills,* and *adaptability skills* that are indispensable to life.

Even though work experience and placement are segments of community involvement, they will not be included in this document, as they are discussed in separate documents.

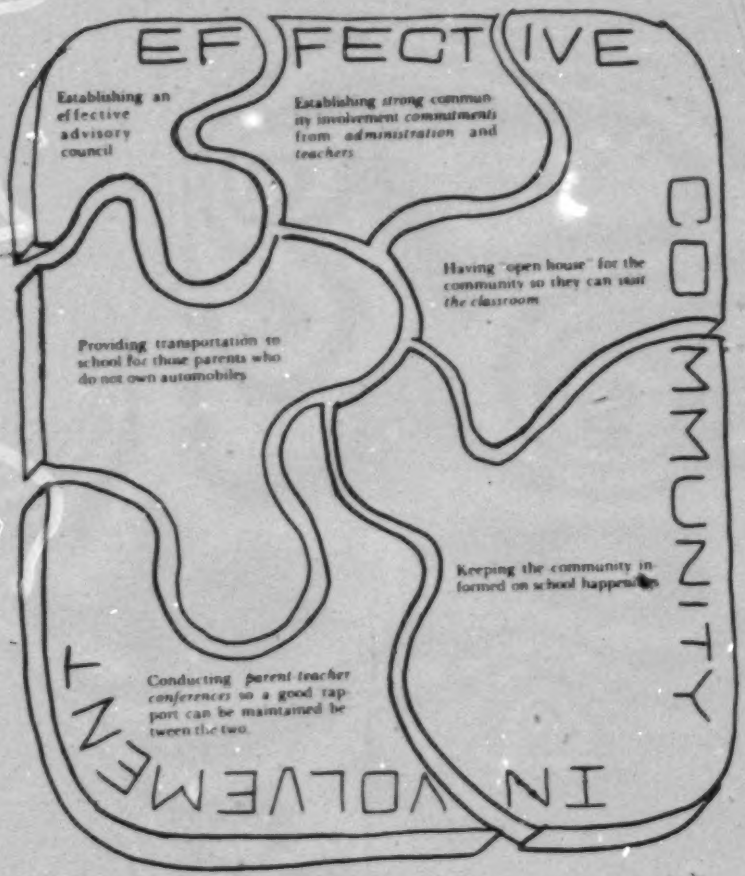
There are numerous ways to involve the community in your career education program. One way is by inviting a resource person into the classroom. . . . . .

...SO BASIC CHEMISTRY IS ESSENTIAL IN MIXING MEDICINES.... NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY MR ROGERS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TABLE OF ELEMENTS!
KENTUCKY

AND THAT, STUDENTS, IS HOW I FILL A PRESCRIPTION FOR PEOPLE WHEN THEY COME INTO MY DRUG STORE!... ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS?

What Challenges Must I, First, Overcome Before I Can Have Effective Community Involvement?

If you can fit the pieces of this puzzle together by accomplishing the challenges, YOU are well on YOUR way to establishing effective community involvement.


EFFECTIVE
COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT
Establishing an effective advisory council
Establishing *strong* community involvement *commitments* from *administration* and *teachers*
Having "open house" for the community so they can visit *the classroom*
Providing transportation to school for those parents who do not own automobiles
Keeping the community informed on school happenings
Conducting *parent-teacher conferences* so a good rapport can be maintained between the two

If you can't, it will be difficult for you to establish an effective program.

STEP ONE: How Do I Begin?

- You begin by selecting an advisory council because it can be invaluable to you. These community representatives can help you to plan and implement an effective program. Thus, they become a liaison between the school and community.

- During the selection process, you might ask yourself the following questions:

Q. Who should help with the selection process?

A. Superintendents, principals, supervisors, career education coordinator, guidance counselor, and a teacher are key people.

Q. What should be their responsibilities?

A. An advisory council should act as a liaison between the school and community and assist the coordinator and teachers in planning career education activities. In no way are they a decision-making group; instead, they are merely as their title indicates – advisors.

Q. How many and who should serve on the council?

A. An advisory council should reflect a cross-section of community people, but should not exceed ten (10) people because in working with a larger group than this, you might encounter problems with members communicating their ideas; working cooperatively to accomplish goals; and attending scheduled meetings.

Q. How should I contact these people?

A. One may contact these people via telephone, letter, or personal visit – preferably a personal visit – and orient everyone individually.

After I Have My Advisory Council Formed—Then What?

STEP TWO: After you have formed your advisory council, set the time, date, and place for the first meeting.

Some questions you might ask yourself are:

Q. What should be the topic of discussion of my first meeting?

A. Orient the council on the overall school curriculum and identify YOUR goals for the year. Also, identify activities that would involve the community.

Q. What kind of goals might be set?

A. They will vary, of course, but some goals might be:

- To mesh classroom activities with the world of work.
- To establish a good rapport between the school and the community.

Q. How do I organize an agenda?

A. You could begin with orientation; move to preparation; and, end with "looking ahead."

Now, let's begin with ORIENTATION and see what could be done.

Q. Do I need to organize a file of available resource persons in the community?

A. A compilation of community resource persons is highly recommended.

Q. How do I begin to organize a file of resource persons?

A. You could make a survey of all available resource people in your community by mailing them questionnaires, calling them, or contacting them personally. If time allows, a personal visit to perspective resource persons is most effective.

Q. What information do I convey to these people?

A. First, you could explain your goals and activities and invite them to participate in the school-community program. Emphasize to them, however, the purpose of their visit to the classroom – to explain to students the relationship between classroom activities and the world of work.

Q. Once I get a commitment, then what?

A. You could possibly ask for the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number, occupation, most convenient day and time when they could join the students in a classroom discussion, etc.

Q. Who keeps this information?

A. If a school has a career education coordinator, (s)he is the most likely person. If a school has no career

education coordinator, then any school personnel who comes into contact with all the teachers, is a likely candidate. Regardless of whom you select, this person should keep an accurate record of resource persons who become involved with classroom activities. By keeping accurate records, you would not call upon a resource person too often.

Q. How can I get the teacher, the parent, and the business, industrial, and professional people together to orient them on the program and simply get them acquainted with one another?

A. A visitation time is needed here. The following visitation schedule is a suggestion:

•In lieu of in-service days, or during plannings periods have teachers visit a designated resource person at work. Not only could teachers become acquainted with the resource persons, but they could also become familiar with what the resource person does for a living. The teacher might possibly gain hands-on-experience by actually working with a resource person for a short period of time. Parents could do likewise at designated times. This cross-fertilization of ideas could be most helpful to all concerned.

Q. What is an effective method of orienting civics groups?

A. An effective method of orienting civic groups on career education activities is making a slide-tape presentation. This method can be accomplished by writing a commentary which describes your program and by taking slides of classroom activities which document the script.

Q. What is an effective method of orienting the Parent-Teachers Association?

A. A student-demonstration is effective with this group. The career education coordinator could invite a classroom to give a unit demonstration on "The Post Office" during a PTA meeting.

Q. How can the news media help with orienting the community on career education?

A. Students could tape radio programs and news releases on a topic of career education (i.e. field trips, hands-on-experiences, simulated activities in the classroom, etc.), and air these programs so that the community could stay informed on career education activities in the school.

The radio programs could be panel discussions on career education themes, while the news articles could be an update of career education activities.

You have ORIENTED the community. Now let's PREPARE specific activities.

After the orientation procedure has been planned, you might begin to develop specific activities which take the students out into the community or bring the community into the classrooms.

Q. How do I get the students involved in school-community activities?

A. Allow students to visit their fathers/mothers on-the-job in order to better understand their parents' work. After receiving parental permission, let students shadow – follow along with, observe – their parents. If this can't be arranged, let students visit a resource person with whom they are acquainted. In doing this, students will become better acquainted with people and their work.

Q. How do I get the parents involved in school-community activities?

A. Involve the parents as chaperones for field trips, judges for contests, consultants on special projects, or teacher-aides in the classroom. In some cases, however, parents might have to meet certain requirements depending upon the activity.

Q. How do I get the business, industrial and professional personnel involved in school-community activities?

A. Invite a business, industrial, or professional personnel into the classroom as a resource person. Of course, the kind of resource person you invite would depend upon the topic and subject you are teaching.

- Let's say you're teaching court procedures in government – you might invite an attorney-at-law to the class and let him explain, first-hand, his experiences in courtroom procedures.

You might possibly conduct a mock trial and let him be a prosecuting attorney.

Now that you have this year's activities planned, what then? You might begin to think about a COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER.

Q. Who could sponsor a COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER?

A. A community education center is a good project for the PTA.

Q. How do I plan and conduct a community education center?

A. First, secure the permission of the Board of Education.

•Attend a regular school board meeting and explain the purpose and need for this program.

Next, conduct orientation sessions in the school and throughout the community.

•Orient teachers during a faculty meeting. Visit parents and business, industrial, and professional personnel and orient them.

Then, determine a list of possible courses which might be offered.

•Assess the needs and interests of the community. Keep in mind a perspective instructor for the possible courses.

Now, survey the community for interest, select priorities, and secure instructors.

•Send a questionnaire to a sampling of the community. Have the local newspaper print it for the entire community. Contact perspective instructors and secure a commitment.

Finally, conduct registration and you are ready to begin classes for a two to four week period, two evenings each week, two hours an evening.

•Announce a designated time, date, and place for registration in the local paper and over the local radio/television station.

You can defray the expenses by charging a small fee for materials used in certain classes.

•Food classes, art classes, ceramic classes, etc., might charge a minimal laboratory fee.

This kind of program can be developed with little funds, as people are sometimes willing to share their expertise free gratis.

How Do I Begin To Implement Community Involvement Activities?

Begin with the ADVISORY COUNCIL and ask yourself the following questions:

Q. How many meetings should I have?

A. Three meetings during the year is sufficient—one in October, January, and March.

Q. Where should I conduct meetings?

A. A school is an ideal setting and noon hour is an ideal time.

Q. Who should serve as chairperson of the committee?

A. The principal or career education coordinator are two effective persons.

Now you are ready to implement your plans with the help of the advisory council.

Move on to the FILE OF RESOURCE PERSONS:

Q. Have you surveyed the entire community?

A. It is necessary that you invite all resource persons in your community to participate in your program in order to maintain good public relations.

Q. Do you have a variety of resource persons?

A. It is good to have a cross-section of resource persons who represent all fifteen occupational clusters.

Q. Do teachers know to contact you for resource persons?

A. If they don't know, tell them.

Now you are ready to contact resource persons for teachers.

Next, look at THE PARENT AND THE BUSINESS, INDUSTRIAL, AND PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL VISITATION and ask yourself:

Q. Who should participate in this visitation?

A. All teachers who plan to incorporate career education elements into their classroom activities and all interested parents.

Q. When should this visitation be scheduled?

A. Preferably early in the fall semester as this will allow the teacher ample time to plan career education activities with the help of parents.

Q. Whom should the teacher visit?

A. If the teacher knows what (s)he plans to study, (s)he should visit a resource person who can assist him/her with that unit. Otherwise, (s)he should contact the coordinator for assistance.

Now who will you visit this fall?

Review your SLIDE-TAPE PRESENTATION TO CIVIC GROUPS:

Q. When is the best time to develop a slide-tape?

A. Usually, by early spring teachers will have taught

career education activities; thus, they are more apt to have a better selection of slides. Therefore, you can plan on giving slide-tape presentations to civic groups in March or April.

Lights Out ! Begin.

It's time to orient and keep the PARENT-TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION informed on career education activities:

Q. What is an effective method of orienting and keeping the PTA informed on the career education program?

A. Any classroom or individual student demonstrations which reflect human interest activities are effective. Also, a panel of administrators, principals, teachers, and students, discussing the accomplishments and future plans of career education would be effective. Of course, direct parent involvement in planning and implementing activities would be most effective.

What demonstration will you present at the next PTA meeting?

Now you are ready for your first NEWS ARTICLE. Check to see:

Q. Who is responsible for writing the news articles?

A. Each teacher who conducts career education activities should be responsible for submitting a news article.

Q. Who is responsible for submitting the news articles to the local newspaper?

A. The career education coordinator should designate a weekly or monthly due date, collect the articles, and deliver them to the newspaper office.

Remember, tomorrow is the deadline date!

Oh yes, how about the TAPED RADIO PROGRAM?

Q. Who should participate in these programs?

A. Any school personnel or community resource persons, superintendent, principal, supervisor, guidance counselor, coordinator, teacher, students, resource persons – are effective people.

You're ON THE AIR!

How about your ON-THE-JOB VISITATIONS?

Q. What is the purpose of this visitation?

A. To ensure the student a better understanding of the type of work his/her parents do, is the primary purpose. Furthermore, it offers the student an opportunity to identify with all facets of the world of work.

Q. How can individual student experiences contribute to entire class experiences?

A. Conducting sharing sessions on different topics of work qualifications is of utmost importance.

What topics should be discussed?

A. The administration and faculty members can present an overview of the career education program. A panel of students can discuss their work experiences, while students and parents can discuss kinds of courses that could enhance the existing curriculum.

Ready, set, begin.

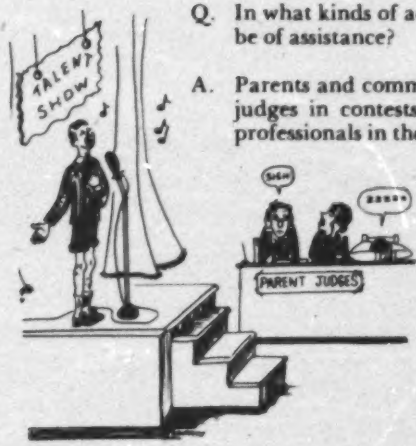
Have I contacted people for their help in career education activities?

Q. What is the most effective method to contact people?

A. A telephone call or letter works well with some people; however, here again, the personal visit is most effective.

Q. In what kinds of activities can the community people be of assistance?

A. Parents and community leaders are very effective as: judges in contests, chaperones on field trips, para professionals in the classroom, etc.



Get on your walking shoes !

Look ahead for a moment. What's planned for a COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM? What questions do you have? Perhaps some of the following:

Q. How do I publicize this program?

A. Several different methods should be used to ensure wide coverage and to provide reinforcement techniques. Among the methods are: brochures, radio announcements, announcements to civic organizations, telephone calls, and personal visits.

Q. Who decides the course offerings?

A. Initially, a survey of the community interest. After that, a check list should be circulated among community people to determine which courses should be offered.

Q. Who could instruct the classes?

A. Teachers, parents, and resource persons, or any other persons who have interest. (e.g. a service station attendant might teach auto mechanics, an individual who enjoys decorating cakes might teach this kind of class, etc.)

Q. Who could be eligible for these classes?

A. The *entire* community.

Q. How could scheduling be conducted?

A. Of course, the instructor, first of all, would identify times which (s)he could be available. After this had been established, a registration date would be scheduled at a school location. Interested participants would then register for his/her class(es).

Q. Is there a tuition fee?

A. No, this is not advisable; however, a small fee is necessary to defray expenses for materials used in certain classes.

When do you think you can begin this kind of program?

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS . . . . . .

The intent of COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT is to bring the "world of work" into the classroom or vice versa.

As a result of this involvement, the community will become *better informed* on *curriculum, problems,* and *needs for improvement* in school programs and the students will become *aware of people and their work.*

If this intent is accomplished, the old adage, "Schools are for Children" will be rightly changed to "Schools are for Everyone."

Note:

Additional information on the Community Involvement Program can be procured by contacting:

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